**Dear Extroverts (An Honest Letter from an Introvert)**

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*[This post is in response to my friend, Amelia's, post entitled "*[*Dear Introverts (An Honest Letter from an Extrovert)*](http://eslmarriage.com/2012/04/12/dear-introverts-an-honest-letter-from-an-extrovert/)*."  It is the first in a series of posts about* [*My Introvert Life*](http://timandolive.com/my-introvert-life/)*.]*

Dear Extroverts,

You amaze me.  Your outgoing friendliness, your capacity for life and people, your sheer energy!  I’m fascinated by the way you can go from engagement to engagement without taking a break.  And how you never seem to be at a loss for words.

I must confess, when I see the ease with which you operate in the world, I am often envious.  You just don’t seem fazed by all that happens.  And you command attention so easily.  I’m jealous of how you can move so quickly and accomplish so much in a day.  The world does seem to be made for people like you.

I must also say I’m sorry.  I’m sorry I keep declining your invitations.  Please know that when I do so, it’s not because I don’t like you.  I’ve probably just had a very full week and need some time on my own to refill my energy tank.  It often pains me to say “no” to you.  I fear that one of these days, I’ll have turned you down one too many times and you won’t be my friend anymore.  Or that I’ll miss out on some fantastic experience.

I’m sorry, too, for making you feel awkward by my silence.  It takes me a while to put words to my thoughts.  It’s scary for me to start speaking without knowing the complete thought I want to express.  In most cases, I probably have something to say – if you just wait long enough for me to gather my thoughts.  Or, if you give me a heads up and mention it to me beforehand, I can mull things over in advance.  You probably wouldn’t believe this, but most times, I will rehearse a phone call in my head before I dial your number.  And after we hang up, I’ll replay our conversation twenty times in my head, thinking of better things I could have said.

I often find myself wishing I were more like you.  Sometimes I resent my need for so much sleep and time alone.  I feel so limited and needy.  I dislike the fact that I often have to pare down my to-do list to one or two things a day and learn to be satisfied with that.  I also wish it didn’t take so much effort to get out of the house.  At conferences, parties and meetings, I sometimes take refuge in the quietness of the bathroom.  And then I feel silly, or think I’m a bad person for skipping out on things.

Oh, I’ve tried to be more like you.  For many years, I packed my schedule and attended every event.  The results were disastrous.  I had to take a year of medical leave to recuperate.

I’m learning though.  I’m learning that being able to sit in stillness is a gift.  And that my limits are also a gift.  I’m learning to be more bold with what I have to offer the world; to speak louder when I do decide to talk.  I’m learning, too, that I can appreciate your strengths without needing to possess them myself.  Because in the end, we all need each other.  And you inspire me to take more risks in life.

I do really appreciate when you initiate with me though.  Picking up the phone is a bit scary sometimes, so it’s nice when you call.  I apologize in advance though if you get my voicemail…  My phone is sometimes on silent(!)

Thanks for bearing with me.

Your dear, mysterious, and quiet friend, Olive